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ABSTRACT

Continuing an inquiry into what variables explain audience trust in media, a study drew upon two theoretical areas in attitude research to propose a curvilinear relationship between attitude extremity and trust in media--namely that individuals who feel fairly neutral toward an issue and those who report strongly held attitudes see the media as less credible than those with a moderate attitude. The data came from a random sample of 268 San Francisco area residents interviewed over the telephone about their attitudes toward mass media, news, and public opinion. Respondents were sorted into categories for low, moderate, or high extremity of attitude based on their responses to a Likert scale. As a result of this sorting scheme, the extremity of attitude measure was issue-specific but direction-free. The results supported the curvilinear relationship hypothesized, especially in the case of newspaper coverage of issues. The relationship appeared marginally significant for television. Political liberals demonstrated the curvilinear pattern, but conservatives' trust ratings declined steadily as their partisanship increased. (Charts illustrating the text are appended.) (HOD)

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HOSTILE MEDIA OR HOSTILE AUDIENCE?

RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN ATTITUDE EXTREMITY AND TRUST IN MEDIA

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-- ABSTRACT --

Press, public and academic attention has turned increasingly to questions of media credibility, and some recent research has considered the relationship between audience attitudes and trust in media. This paper draws upon two theoretical areas in attitude change research to propose a curvilinear relationship between attitude extremity and trust in media -- namely that individuals who feel fairly neutral toward an issue and those who report strongly-held attitudes both see the media as less credible than those in a moderate attitude position.

The data reported here support that hypothesis, especially in the case of newspaper coverage of issues. The relationship appeared marginally significant for television. Political liberals also demonstrated the curvilinear pattern, but conservatives' trust ratings declined steadily as their partisanship increased. The consistent differences for newspapers vis-a-vis television news coverage was discussed; print media may be subjected to more active credibility evaluations.

The data reported in this study continue an inquiry into variables antecedent to audience evaluations of media, specifically what factors explain trust in media.[1]

Some of the earliest empirical studies of this concept considered source credibility as an independent variable and measured its effects on attitude change.[2] Credibility has been a much investigated topic since that time, and communication researchers have begun to probe not only its effects but its possible causes.[3] Considering credibility as a dependent variable is not new; the 1951 Hovland group noted in the validation of their experimental manipulation that along with effects of source characteristics, the audience's evaluations [of trustworthiness of the source] "...were also affected by their personal opinions on the topic before the communication was ever presented."[4]

A recent series of experiments demonstrated that audience members more partisan or biased on a specific issue are more likely to perceive bias in the media treatment of that issue -- bias against their own side of the issue.[5] Other studies have shown a relationship between the controversiality of issues and evaluations of the press. Anast found that readers interested in more controversial events gave less favorable evaluations to the press.[6] Work by Roberts and Leifer suggests that credibility ascribed to the media decreases as issues become more

controversial[7] and the authors reasoned that a source speaking on a more controversial issue would be seen as more likely to have a bias.

However Gunther and Lasorsa, pursuing a related topic, found that as individuals' importance ratings of an issue increased, their trust in newspaper coverage of that issue also increased.[8] On first consideration, this seemed a conflicting outcome, since the authors expected issue importance, issue controversiality, and partisanship on an issue to be related concepts with correlated indicators, and that their relationship with perceived media credibility, though not uniform, would be consistent.

Reconsidering these results, and Hovland's reference to the importance of "personal opinions" on a topic, suggested a revised conceptualization of the independent variable. Rather than issue importance, or controversiality, it seemed likely that strength of attitude on an issue would better explain differences in perceived media credibility.

Two competing areas of theory in persuasion literature -- cognitive response theory and social judgment theory -- prompted this reconceptualization. Interestingly, the two theoretical approaches predict contrary results; but in their conflict is an argument for the usefulness of attitude extremity as a predictor of trust in media messages.

The cognitive response theory advanced by Petty, Cacioppo and others[9] suggests that when a person is not involved with a topic, issues and ideas in the content of the message receive

little attention, and the recipient instead attends to "peripheral" qualities such as source likability or credibility. (In this low involvement condition, more attitude change about the topic results from manipulating such peripheral cues.) In high involvement, on the other hand, the cognitive response model argues that the audience member has good reason to take heed of information in the message content and is more likely to ignore peripheral cues. In this "central processing" condition, manipulations of message content produce more attitude change than differences in credibility or likability. Judgments about credibility may be more favorable in this condition because people have more or less set aside their skeptical considerations of the source.

Social judgment theory as formulated by Sherif et al. also depends on different levels of involvement.[10] Those differences, argued Sherif, will be associated with different latitudes of acceptance, rejection or noncommitment for different messages concerning an issue. In the high involvement condition, social judgment predicts a wider latitude of rejection, with fewer messages falling in a subject's acceptable or noncommital range (thus producing less attitude change). In less involving situations, however, the latitude of rejection is narrower, more messages are likely to fall in the acceptable or noncommital range, and therefore more likely to be considered (with more resulting attitude change).

Though these two theories address questions of persuasion, evaluation of source appears to be an important intervening process in both. In the cognitive response view, evaluation and

potential derogation (or validation) of the message source is the determining strategy in a low involvement situation, while that strategy is conspicuously absent -- turned down or even switched off, so to speak -- in more involving circumstances where characteristics like credibility are simply not heeded. In the social judgment literature the strategy is not discussed so directly. But one can infer that when more messages are acceptable, then the source of such messages is more acceptable, while if most messages are rejected, the rationale for such rejection quite likely depends on lower evaluations of the source -- seeing the source as biased, misguided or ill-informed, for example.

The contradictory outcomes predicted by these two theories are striking. Petty and Cacioppo predict (and find) more attitude change in high involvement, where they claim subjects are processing information more deeply. Sherif predicts (and finds) less attitude change in high involvement, where subjects simply find many more messages rejectable, and discount them (or their source).

It may be the case, though, that these apparently competing bodies of thought are dealing with more than just two levels of involvement. The lowest involvement state would seem, as Petty and Cacioppo suggest, to concern itself with peripheral cues, fewer cognitive responses, and little or no attitude formation. What Petty and Cacioppo label high involvement may really be a moderate involvement condition where attitudes are actively shaped and attention is paid to the substance of messages, with

deeper cognitive processing. The latitudes of rejection in this moderate involvement condition ought to be relatively smaller, as a respondent weighs more of the available information and messages. And the high involvement condition posed by Sherif may extend beyond the range of the Petty and Cacioppo model -- for here we expect to find people with a wider latitude of rejection. These people, with strongly-held attitudes, will more selectively process and more often reject messages. In such a condition they are more likely to be critical of message sources, and concomitantly show less attitude change.

Involvement, though, is difficult to operationalize simultaneously across its full range of intensity. As Roser has argued,[11] the apparently conflicting findings in these two bodies of research may be artifacts of their different measures of involvement. Experiments to test cognitive response theory have employed a "task involvement" manipulation where "high" involvement is induced by assigning subjects to a task such as answering quiz questions or preparing a speech on the issue. The social judgment model, on the other hand, has primarily used "issue involvement" indicators, measures of an individual's existing personal opinion or attitude on an issue. Presumably a personal position developed over time, issue involvement probably operationalizes a state of more profound personal relevance in many cases than do task manipulations.

These methodological differences suggest additional evidence of more than two involvement levels. Though issue involvement presents obvious difficulties for experimental research design, it likely offers a better operational measure of mature, more

deeply committed attitude involvement -- and thus a measure of the genuinely high involvement domain.

In this study, extremity of attitude was chosen as an indicator of the independent variable. Such a choice does not assume that involvement and attitude extremity are the same thing (one might be highly involved while holding a moderate attitude, for example), but for purposes of testing these hypotheses, it appears the best operational measure of the different dynamics at work in different involvement levels. Where exceptions occur, they seem more likely to work against the hypotheses, rather than in aid of them, and seem unlikely to add to the probability of type I error. Thus a curvilinear relationship was postulated from the considerations discussed above and specified in the following hypotheses:

1. As attitudes on an issue change from low to moderate extremity, trust in media messages on that issue will increase.

2. As attitudes on an issue move from moderate to high extremity (becoming more polarized), trust in media messages on that issue will decline.

Channel comparisons have been of long-standing concern in media research, and trust was measured separately for television and newspapers in this study. With the expectation that the theoretical synthesis proposed above will apply to both media, hypothesis three states:

3. The curvilinear relationship hypothesized between extremity of attitude and media trust will hold for both newspaper and television channels.

The measures taken to operationalize this test were related to specific issues. But it proved difficult not to wonder

whether the curvilinear relationship wouldn't also hold for a more generalized case of extremity. Extremity of attitude in the hypotheses above is a relational term, activated by the issue to which the attitude is directed. But as is sometimes the case in conceptualization, a term can be more broadly defined. Political ideology is an example of this more generalized category of extremity of attitude, for it refers to more general referents, such as political party, a set of candidates, or an aggregate of issues. Items referring to political ideology call for a global attitude, and an attribute closer to a property or trait in the audience member.[12] Thus a fourth hypothesis analogous to the curvilinear relationship defined in one and two above was posed:

4. As strength of political ideology moves from moderate to somewhat partisan, trust in media will increase; as ideology moves from somewhat partisan to highly partisan (firmly liberal or conservative), trust in media will decline.

METHOD

The data reported here come from a random sample of San Francisco peninsula residents taken during April and May of 1985. Respondents (N=268) were contacted by telephone using working Bay area prefixes; the last four digits were dialed using a random number table. The sampling scheme was devised to avoid dialing of non-working prefixes but to include unlisted and new numbers. Interviewers made up to three call-backs to numbers where there was no answer. People under 18 and those answering at a business phone were not interviewed.

Graduate students in a precision journalism class conducted the interviewing after two hours of training. They introduced

themselves as Stanford University students from the Communication Department conducting a survey about mass media, news and public opinion.

The questionnaire instrument was programmed into microcomputers in a lab equipped with telephones. Interviewers read questions from a terminal screen, where response options were also displayed. As an item was answered, interviewers keyed the response code directly into the computer, prompting the next item to appear. The technique was employed to reduce measurement error, coding and keyboard time. And since the computer would not accept invalid codes for the response scales, the only missing data came from genuine refusals to answer.

Respondents in this sample, drawn from an upwardly mobile, suburban area, tended to be somewhat higher in income and education than their national counterparts. They were also somewhat younger, but other demographic measures corresponded quite closely to national statistics.

As a measure of extremity of attitude, individuals were given a pair of attitude statements (the pairs of items were phrased so as to be opposite in valence) for each of three issues -- abortion, Latin America and welfare.[13] They were sorted into low, moderate or high extremity of attitude by their responses to a Likert scale.[14] As a result of this sorting scheme, the extremity of attitude measure was issue-specific but direction-free. That is, a respondent who chose strongly agree or strongly disagree responses consistent with a pro-life position on the abortion issue would be classified as high

extremity of attitude together with a "pro-choice" respondent who took the opposite strongly agree or strongly disagree responses.

To measure the dependent variable respondents were asked to rate their trust in both newspaper and television coverage of each of the three issues on a one-to-ten scale, where one meant no trust and ten indicated the greatest trust.

To register political ideology, the interview subjects were asked to respond to three statements (using a five-point Likert scale): "I think of myself as a liberal." "I think of myself as a moderate." "I think of myself as a conservative." They were sorted by how strongly they selected a category. Those who chose an agree (or strongly agree) response only for "liberal" were classed as liberals, those who were more ambiguous, and agreed, or strongly agreed, with both "liberal" and "moderate" statements, fell into an intermediate liberal-moderate category, and so on. Clearly inconsistent (e.g. those who agreed with both "liberal" and "conservative") respondents were omitted.

Dependent variable measures for hypothesis four call for a more general gauge of media trust. Trust ratings on all three issues were summed, and added to a trust-in-newspaper item referring to a "most important problem" each respondent had previously named. The indicators in this index showed good reliability, with a Cronbach's alpha of .85. A trust measure for television was created in the same fashion, producing a .84 reliability score.

RESULTS

To test these data for a curvilinear pattern, means for each

of the trust measures were plotted for each group in the three extremity of attitude categories.

-- FIGURE ONE ABOUT HERE --

The result did reveal a similar curvilinear pattern for both newspaper and television coverage of each issue. (see figure one) Media trust ratings went up as extremity of attitude increased from low to moderate, and then turned down again as attitude extremity increased from moderate to high. The mean trust differences appear larger for ratings of newspaper than of television coverage. An ANOVA F-test (see table one, row one) proved significant for all three issues in the newspaper category, although marginally so on the abortion issue. Aggregated mean differences were not significant on any of the issues in the case of trust in television coverage, but the direction of all six curves appears consistent with the hypothesis.

-- TABLE ONE ABOUT HERE --

However, the graphs in figure one are drawn on a reduced range of the dependent variable, and a simple visual evaluation risks overinterpretation. The relationships require a test for statistical significance, and since the levels of extremity of attitude represent a continuum, the next appropriate step is a trend analysis. Results of a test for trends using the oneway ANOVA polynomial procedure (see table one, rows 2 and 3) provided statistical support for the curvilinear hypothesis. Trust in newspaper coverage showed no significant linear relationship with

extremity of attitude, but the curvilinear component was significant for all three issues. The curvilinear trend test offered only limited support to the hypothesis in the case of television coverage. The abortion issue showed no significant trend, while quadratic components for the Latin America and welfare issues were just marginally significant ($p<.1$).

Support for hypothesis four was rather ambiguous. Preliminary zero order correlations showed a strong linear relationship between political ideology and the newspaper trust index ($r=.28$, $p<.001$). To offer a better look at the pattern, figure two shows trust means for both television and newspapers plotted against the full range of political ideology. In other words, the x-axis in these plots is not folded over, as it was in Figure I to show a unidirectional extremity of attitude. The independent variable here is not content-free, but instead shows the full range of political values from conservative through moderate to liberal.

-- FIGURE TWO ABOUT HERE --

The curvilinear hypothesis appears to hold for the liberal side of the political spectrum, though quite weakly for television trust measures. Trust increases from the just moderate to the moderate-liberals, and then declines again as extremity moves to the staunch liberal position. But for the other side of the middle-of-the-road, trust measures take a steady downward slide as respondents report themselves more firmly conservative. For newspaper trust the figure suggests a fairly steep trend; the linear correlation improves (to $r=.32$)

when extreme liberals are removed from the political ideology range.

As in Table I, the cell differences here appear more dramatic for newspaper trust ratings than for television. The ANOVA F-test is again significant in the newspaper category, but not for television.

DISCUSSION

These data do produce support for the curvilinear relationship hypothesized between extremity of attitude toward an issue and trust in media coverage of that issue. They also suggest a resolution to the apparent discrepancies discussed above.

The introduction to this paper proposed that theoretical differences between the cognitive response model and social judgment theory might rest simply on different ranges of involvement. The condition Sherif calls low involvement may be a stage of moderate attitude formation where more messages are acceptable for consideration, and assessments, especially negative assessments, need not be made. At the same time, Petty and Cacioppo are defining this moderate attitude situation as high involvement, where people give more attention to message content, and less to cosmetic or peripheral cues, those cues of the type that lead to judgments of trust. Both theories offer explanations, fairly compatible explanations, for the mid-range involvement condition defined here as moderate attitude extremity.

Thus, if extremity of attitude does measure a more complete range of involvement, and both theories are correct within their attenuated ranges, then both explanations may be at work in this study. Cognitive response theory would explain the increasing trust in media between low and moderate attitude extremity; social judgment tells us why trust declines as we go from the moderate to high extremity condition.

The apparent conflict between empirical findings mentioned in the introduction may be resolved by this explanation as well. As Gunther and Lasorsa have speculated, the positive relationship they found between importance ratings of an issue and media trust may be because the 'importance' dimension doesn't clearly identify respondents in a state of high opinion extremity. In some cases an individual may rate an issue highly important while holding a neutral or moderate attitude toward that issue (though the converse seems less likely). The conflicting negative relationship found between highly partisan subjects and perceptions of media bias by Vallone et al. may be similarly due to an attenuated range -- their purposive sample was force fed with subjects already highly partisan about the issue in question. Again, both findings may be valid, each in its own part of the range of attitude extremity.

The analysis of cross-sectional data is a liability in the fact that the hypotheses postulate a range of processing strategies within persons, rather than any pattern between persons. The hypotheses predict that as an individual's attitude extremity on an issue changes, his or her trust in mediated

information changes also. One could argue that cross-sectional data only make a case for a static disposition in persons, since we have no information about possible changes over time in the independent variable.

But with the same measures taken on three issues (and if respondents aren't consistent in their attitute extremity across issues) there is a case for the notion that processing strategies and trust assessments differ as attitude extremity differs.

Individuals in this sample do show different attitude extremity on different issues. Some within-person correlation appears between each pair of extremity measures (between welfare/Latin America r=.20, between welfare/abortion r=.30, and between Latin America/abortion r=.24). But such coefficients do not represent serious intercorrelation -- respondents show a healthy degree of discrimination between issues in terms of how strongly attitudes are felt.

However, respondents were less discriminating in reporting trust in media across issues (indicated by the reliability scores reported in the method section above). Intercorrelations of the trust measures were strong between each pair of issues (clustering around r=.60) for both media. This relationship might be described as a generalized incredulity factor, contributing to each specific trust response, and clouding the interpretation somewhat.

Thus we do not have merely repeated measures of a stable attitude extremity trait within persons, and there is support for the hypothesis that within individuals a different attitude position is associated with different trust judgments; but we can

be less sure about the nature of those trust judgments, since they appear to be driven both by reference to a particular issue and a more global trust response.

Though it presents an interesting pattern, the relationship between extremity of political ideology and trust in media is more difficult to interpret, especially for newspapers. It may reflect a combination of effects -- the hostile media perception by highly partisan respondents (seen at outer ends of the political ideology dimension where more extreme liberals and conservatives both report less trust than their like-minded but more moderate friends) and the pluralistic view of a liberal bias in the media (seen in the overall positive slope of this curve).

It may be, too, that the curvilinear hypothesis simply does not generalize well from specific issues to broader, more global attitudes.[15] This finding is perhaps symptomatic of a pervasive difficulty with conceptualization of media credibility. The term is widely used, often without reference to specific issues, and seems susceptible to the danger of reification -- treating as real on a general level a concept that is only activated in specific circumstances.

In addition, the cognitive response and social judgment theories cited here that would explain an issue-specific curvilinear relationship necessitate processing of specific information or messages. It is less clear how those ideas might connect a political ideology dimension with assessments of media trust.

Finally, and perhaps most interestingly, these data have not

supported hypothesis three. There is a consistent difference between media -- respondents sorted on the independent variables discriminate in their trust evaluations of newspapers far more strongly than for television. Past discussions have speculated on channel differences -- the visual, I-can-believe-what-I-see aspect of television; the trusted personae of TV newspeople; the obscure, less knowable people who make newspapers; the frequency of newspaper editorials;[16] and the sheer quantity of print news, so that newspapers are found both right and wrong more often.[17] With some variation, the trend since 1950 has been declining trust in print media in favor of television. Measuring by Roper's national survey data, television overtook newspapers as the most believable source of news in 1961.[18] But Roper's measure was rather narrowly framed, and much research has taken exception to it.[19] Mean trust scores in this sample primarily produce only chance differences between the two channels, though newspaper coverage of the abortion issue ranks ahead of television as a marginally significant difference (see table two).

-- TABLE TWO ABOUT HERE --

Treating the credibility concept as a relational term and examining the effect of attitude extremity has produced a more complex pattern. Trust judgments for newspapers are lower than for television, but they are also higher. The curves for television news coverage are uniformly flatter than for newspaper coverage. In different conditions, respondents report more trust, and more distrust, for newspapers vis-a-vis television.

Depending on their extremity of attitude, or general political position, respondents seem to be making more discriminating assessments of newspapers. Considering the channel differences listed above suggests that the more active judgments of newspaper credibility may result from newspapers' seeming to be more mediated. Reeves, Chaffee and Tims have argued that mediation may be an important influence on how messages are processed.[20] Their discussion focused on the difference between live and mediated presentations, but one can easily extrapolate to differences between media channels. Visual vs. symbolic information, visible vs. impersonal sources, facts vs. opinions -- such attributes may add up to differences in apparent mediation, the beginning, at least, of a theoretical basis for expecting different processing strategies to be employed with different media. With greater apparent mediation, for example, comes a greater opportunity to impute motives and intentions to the communicator,[21] which is at least one component of credibility. Thus if newspaper news seems more mediated, and inferences about the intentions behind newspaper news are therefore more variable, trust in newspapers will also be more variable.

It is not unreasonable to argue that we have some sense of how we process messages in different channels. Aware of more active and discriminating assessments of newspaper credibility, we naturally respond with more cautious (and lower) trust judgments for the print media when asked the generic "which-one-do-you-trust" question.

But such speculation about degrees of perceived mediation and the resulting inferences about intention can only be presented here as one of the pleasant by-products of all empirical study -- an idea that needs further research.

ENDNOTES

1. see Albert C. Gunther and Dominic L. Lasorsa, "Issue Importance and Perceptions of a Hostile Media," Journalism Quarterly, in press, (1986).

2. see Carl Hovland and W. Weiss, "The influence of source credibility on communicator effectiveness," Public Opinion Quarterly, 15:635-50, (1951).

3. Bruce H. Westley and Werner J. Severin, "Some Correlates of Media Credibility," Journalism Quarterly, 41:325-35, (Summer, 1964).

4. Hovland and Weiss, op cit., p 641.

5. Robert P. Vallone, Lee Ross and Mark R. Lepper, "The Hostile Media Phenomenon: Biased Perceptions and Perceptions of Media Bias in Coverage of the Beirut Massacre," Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 49:577-585, (autumn, 1985).

6. Philip Anast, "Attitude Toward the Press as a Function of Interests," Journalism Quarterly, 38:376-380, (1961).

7. Donald F. Roberts and Aimee Dorr Leifer, "Actions Speak Louder Than Words -- Sometimes," Human Communication Research, 1:257-264, (1975).

8. Gunther and Lasorsa, op cit.

9. for a comprehensive discussion of this theoretical model see Richard E. Petty and John T. Cacioppo, Attitudes and Persuasion: Classic and Contemporary Approaches, Dubuque: William C. Brown Co., pp. 255-267, (1981).

10. see Carolyn W. Sherif, Muzafer Sherif and Roger E. Nebergall, Attitude and Attitude Change: The Social Judgment-Involvement Approach, Philadelphia:W. B. Saunders, (1965).

11. Connie Roser, Cognition and Affect in Persuasion: An Empirical Analysis of Involvement, unpublished doctoral dissertation, Institute for Communication Research, Stanford University, (1986).

12. see Carl G. Hempel, Fundamentals of Concept Formation in Empirical Sciences, Chicago:University of Chicago Press, p. 13, (1952). Hempel distinguishes concepts as property or relation terms, while the argument here takes these as two ends of a continuum.

13. The six attitude items read as follows:

1. Any woman who wants an abortion should be able to get one.

2. Federal funds should not be provided to pay for abortions.

3. The U.S. should keep communist governments out of Latin America.

4. The U.S. should not provide military aid to El Salvador.

5. The U.S. government spends too much money on social welfare programs.

6. The federal government does not do enough to help disadvantaged groups like the poor and the elderly.

14. The Likert scale instructions read as follows:

"For each of the following statements, tell me if you strongly agree, agree, disagree or strongly disagree. If you feel neutral or have no opinion, just say so."

To create categories for extremity of opinion, respondents were categorized as "low" if they chose two neutral responses or one neutral and one moderate response (simply agree or disagree), "moderate" if they chose agree or disagree responses (no neutral or 'strongly' response), and "high" if they chose at least one 'strongly' response and one moderate response, or two 'strongly' responses. As a result of this pattern, an average of 43 respondents fell into the low and high cells, while an average 151 were classified as moderate extremity of opinion.

15. For more discussion of this problem see D. Charles Whitney, "Attitudes Toward the Media: Three Publics," paper presented to the American Association for Public Opinion Research, Delavin, Wisconsin, (May, 1984).

16. Westley and Severin, op. cit.

17. Richard F. Carter and Bradley S. Greenberg, "Newspapers or Television: Which Do You Believe?" Journalism Quarterly, 42:29-34 (1965).

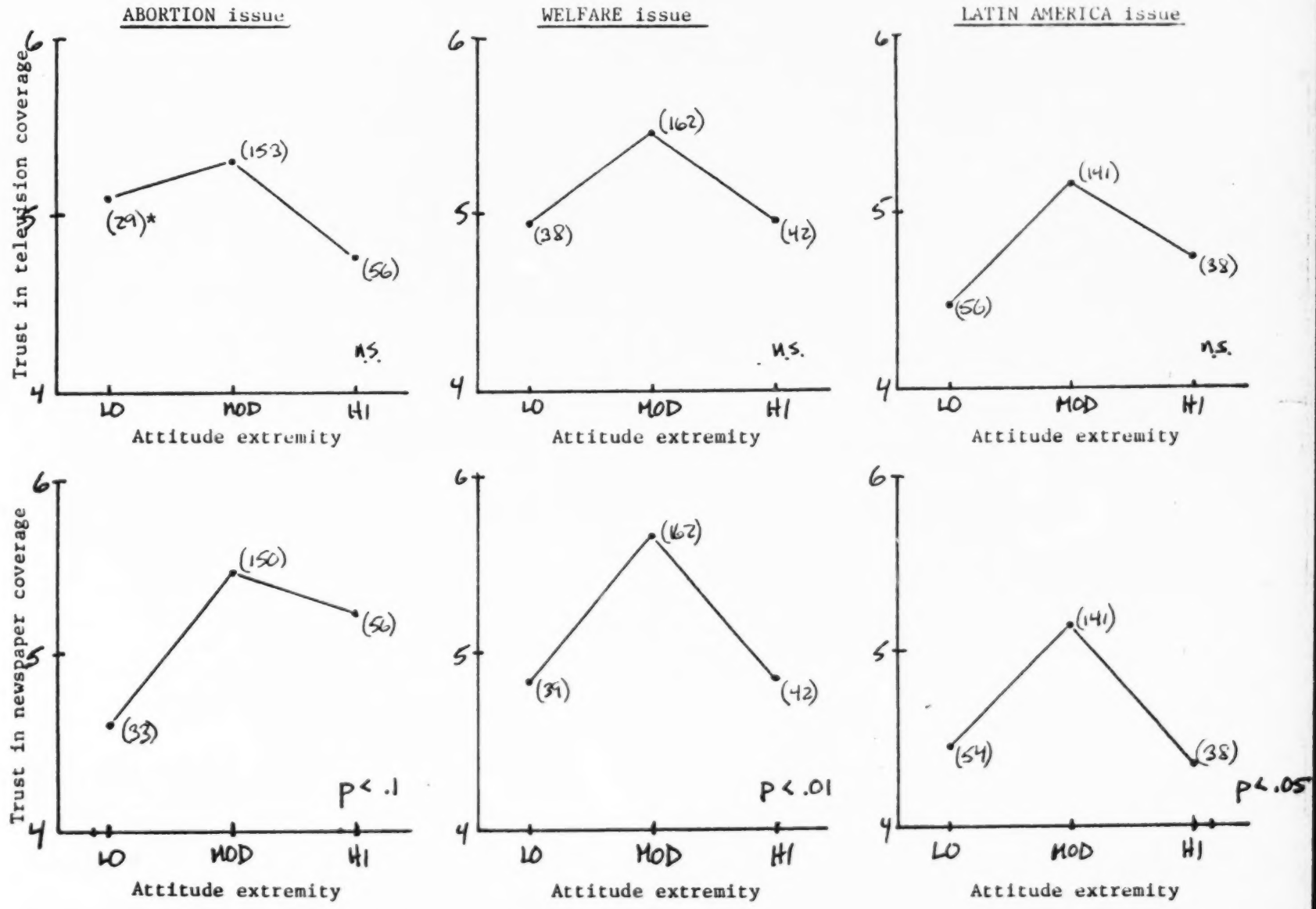
18. Elmo Roper and Associates, New Trends in the Public's Measure of Television and Other Media, Television Information Office, New York, (1964).

19. Carter and Greenberg, op cit.

20. Byron Reeves, Steven H. Chaffee and Albert R. Tims, "Social Cognition and Mass Communication Research," in Michael E. Roloff and Charles R. Berger (eds.) Social Cognition and Communication, Beverly Hills:Sage (1982).

21. Sol Worth and Larry Gross, "Symbolic Strategies," Journal of Communication, 24:27-39 (1974).

FIGURE I: Cell means plotted from breakdown tables, showing effect of extremity of attitude for three issues -- abortion, welfare, Latin America -- on trust in newspapers and trust in television coverage on each issue; ANOVA F-test significance levels included.



* numbers in parentheses indicate N for each cell

TV

NP

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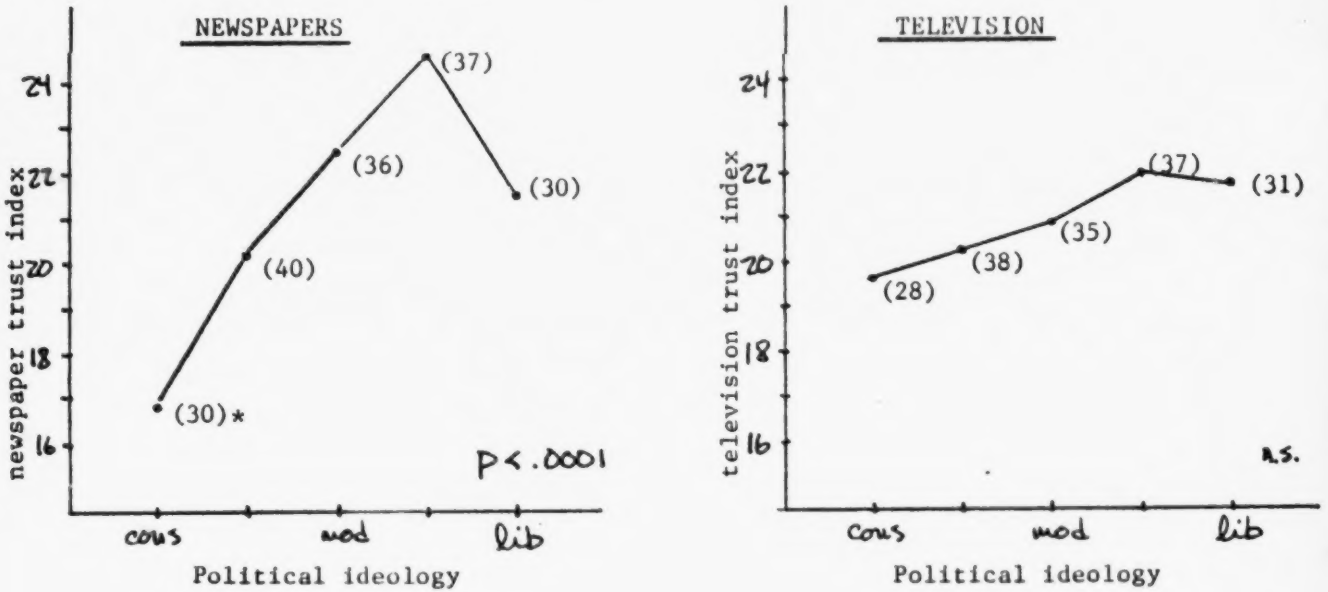
FIGURE II: Plot of newspaper and television trust indices by political ideology; ANOVA significance levels included.



*numbers in parentheses indicate N for each cell

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TABLE 1

F-values and significance levels;
Oneway ANOVA test for aggregate mean differences, linear, and curvilinear trends between attitude extremity and trust in newspaper and television coverage of three issues.

	ABORTION		LATIN AMERICA		WELFARE	
	TV	NP	TV	NP	TV	NP
ANOVA F	1.60	2.74*	2.13	3.67**	1.77	5.19***
LINEAR	1.31	1.18	0.74	0.01	0.00	0.00
QUADRATIC	1.88	4.28**	3.54*	7.32***	3.55*	10.38***

* p <.1
** p <.05
*** p <.01

TABLE 2

Mean trust scores for newspaper and television coverage of three issues.

issue	television	newspaper	t-test
abortion	5.15	5.33	1.94*
Latin America	4.87	4.84	-0.32
welfare	5.32	5.40	0.97

* p <.1
(2-tailed)